

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

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THREE INDICTED FOR ARSON TO RADIO TRANSMITTER

Edward E. McNally, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that **MICHAEL ABBOTT**, age 23, **MICHAEL WILLETT**, age 22, **DANIEL MORRELL**, age 24, and **DONNY SCHREIBER**, age 24, all from Jerseyville, Illinois, were indicted in a six-count federal indictment that address allegations of property destruction and arson.

Count 1 charges that on October 18, 2005, **ABBOTT**, **SCHREIBER**, and **MORRELL** maliciously injured and destroyed property including the radio transmitter and transmitter measuring device of WJBM Radio Station, 1480 AM in Jerseyville, Illinois, a station which is used and intended to be used for the civil defense functions of the United States through the operation of the Federal Alert System. The penalty for that violation is not more than 10 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and not more than 3 years' supervised release.

Counts 2-6 charge violations of the arson statute. The maximum penalty for each of these counts is not less than 5 years' and not more than 20 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and not more than 5 years' supervised release.

Count 2 alleges that on October 18, 2005, **ABBOTT** and **MORRELL** maliciously damaged by means of fire, the WJBM Radio Station building.

Count 3 alleges that between October 21 and October 24, 2005, **ABBOTT**, **WILLETT**,

and **MORRELL** maliciously damaged by means of fire the WJBM Radio Station building.

Count 4 alleges that on October 31, 2005, **ABBOTT, WILLETT,** and **MORRELL** maliciously damaged by means of fire the 518 East Banquet Center in Jerseyville, Illinois.

Counts 5 and 6 allege that **ABBOTT, WILLETT,** and **MORRELL** maliciously damaged by means of fire phone lines used in interstate commerce.

An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The agencies involved in the investigation, or which provided information leading to the indictment, were the Jersey County Sheriff's Department, the Jersey County State's Attorneys Office, the Illinois State Police's Metropolitan Enforcement Group of Southwestern Illinois (MEGSI), and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

The case is assigned to Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Simonson.